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E.O. 12958 R/A
TAGS: SOPM, US, AF, PW, RS

RU T: SADAT INTERVIEW ON ARMS TO AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS

1. NBC NEWS LEAD STORY SEPT. 22 WAS SADAT STATEMENT THAT US IS PURCHASING SOVIET-MADE EQUIPMENT FROM EGYPT FOR SHIPMENT TO AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS. NBC STORY SAID THAT THE COVERT OPERATION "HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR TWENTY-ONE MONTHS AND THAT THE ARMS ARE EITHER ORIGINALS OR REPLICAS OF SOVIET WEAPONS (INCLUDING SHOULDER-FIRED ANTI-TANK AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT ROCKETS, AS WELL AS GUNS AND MORTARS). AN EGYPTIAN OFFICIAL, NOT SADAT, SAID THE ARMS ARE FIRST FLOWN TO KARACHI AND SO, PRESUMABLY OVERLAND, FROM THERE TO AFGHANISTAN.

2. STORY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD ISSUED A "PRESS COMMENT" (SEE PARA 4) BUT THAT PRESIDENT SADAT'S ACCOUNT HAD BEEN INDIRECTLY CONFIRMED BY FORMER CARTER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AND THAT PENTAGON SOURCES ALSO CONFIRMED THE STORY. PRESIDENT CARTER HAD REFUSED ALL COMMENT.

3. RELEVANT PORTIONS OF INTERVIEW FOLLOW:

-- SADAT: "LET ME REVEAL THIS SECRET. THE FIRST MOMENT THE

AFGHANI INCIDENT TOOK PLACE, THE UNITED STATES CONTACTED ME HERE, AND THE TRANSPORT OF ARMS STARTED FROM CAIRO HERE ON US PLANES.

-- PAUL KELLER: ARE YOU STILL ASSISTING YOUR MOJAHED BROTHERS IN AFGHANISTAN THROUGH SHIPMENTS OF ARMS?

-- SADAT: FOR SURE, AND I SHALL CONTINUE TO DO THIS UNTIL THE AFGHANIS GET RID OF THE SOVIETS OUT OF THEIR COUNTRY.

-- KELLER: ARE THEY AMERICAN ARMS THAT YOU ARE SHIPPING, OR ARE THEY EGYPTIAN ARMS?

-- SADAT: NO, SOVIET ARMS. I DIDN'T ASK THE US TO SEND ME PLANES TO TAKE THE AMMUNITIONS. NO, THEY TOLD ME THE AMERICAN PLANES HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED. WHAT WE NEED, SO AND SO AND SO, REQUIREMENTS OF RUSSIAN AMMUNITIONS. I OPENED MY STORES TO THEM, BUT YOU WERE VERY GENEROUS. YOU HAVE PAID ALSO FOR THE AMMUNITIONS.

-- KELLER: HOW DID THEY FLY, HOW DID THEY GET INTO AFGHANISTAN?

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ADAMS: USAL YOU HAVE TO ASK YOUR PEOPLE. I HAVE NEVER TAKEN THEM THIS IT IS NOT MY JOB. IT IS YOUR JOB."

4. TEXT OF DEPARTMENT PRESS GUIDANCE:

Q: IS IT TRUE, AS PRESIDENT SADAT SAID IN THE NBC INTERVIEW, THAT THE US IS BUYING SOVIET-MADE ARMS FROM EGYPT AND SHIPPING THEM TO THE AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS?

A: -- AS IS OUR USUAL PRACTICE, WE DO NOT COMMENT ON SUCH REPORTS.

-- I MIGHT NOTE, AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY, THAT THE BULK OF THE ARMS IN AFGHAN NATIONALIST HANDS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FROM INDIGENOUS SOURCES. THESE INCLUDE ARMS CAPTURED FROM THE SOVIETS, FROM DEFECTING OR COOPERATING AFGHAN ARMY PERSONNEL, AND EXISTING SUPPLIES IN LOCAL HANDS. END TEXT. CLARK

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MB

REVIEWED BY FT DATE 2-13-89

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